The story of the Navy Seabees in Vietnam is one that stretches over a number of years and includes many, many accomplishments. The first Seabees were deployed there as Navy Seabee Technical Assistance Teams, (later named Seabee Teams) at the behest of the State Department for civic action as early as 1956. Other Seabee teams followed, but without a continuous presence, during the late 1950s and early 1960s.

Seabee teams (officially called naval construction units) arrived again in South Vietnam in January 1963, first in support of U. S. Army Special Forces and later in support of U. S. Agency for International Development. They worked to construct small, fortified camps for Army Special Forces and to assist Vietnamese civilians living in rural areas. Special Forces personnel worked in remote sections, training and advising Civilian Irregular Defense Groups in guerrilla tactics; thus, they needed stronger base camps that could withstand Viet Cong ground and mortar attacks.

ACB-1, assigned under the Amphibious Command of the U. S. Navy’s 7th Fleet, was the first commissioned unit to land in South Vietnam in April 1964 in Da Nang. They remained there until May 1965.

The major expansion in U. S. military engagements began in 7 May 1965 when the 3rd Marine Expeditionary Brigade landed at Chu Lai, Republic of South Vietnam (the Seabee Camp there was later named Camp Shields). That landing force was the largest since Inchon, Korea, and included MCB-10, with 24 Officers and 738 Enlisted authorized but manned at about 500 men, including nearly 200 Reservists. Their deployment was from 7 May 1965 and would last, with several redeployments to homeport, until 16 September 1970.

Action in June 1965 resulted in the only Seabee to receive the Congressional Medal of Honor when Seabee Team 1104 and a U. S. Army Special Forces unit were assaulted by the Viet Cong. The battle occurred at the crossroads village of Dong Xoai (pronounced Swy) on June 22,
The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs has once again turned down an effort by Navy veterans to get compensation for possible exposure to Agent Orange during the Vietnam War.

In a document released February 5, 2016, the VA said it would continue to limit benefits related to Agent Orange exposure to only those veterans who set foot in Vietnam, where the herbicide was sprayed, and to those who were on boats in inland rivers.

Advocates for some 90,000 so-called Blue Water Navy veterans who served off the coast of Vietnam have been asking the VA for more than a decade to broaden the policy to include them. They say that they were exposed to Agent Orange because their ships sucked in potentially contaminated water and distilled it for showering, drinking, laundry and cooking. Experts have said the distillation process could have actually concentrated the Agent Orange.

The U.S. Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims last April struck down VA rules that denied compensation for sailors whose ships docked at certain harbors in South Vietnam, including Da Nang. Those ports, the court determined, may have been in the Agent Orange spraying area.

“Environmental health experts in VA’s Veterans Health Administration have reviewed the available scientific information and concluded that it is not sufficient to support a presumption that Blue Water Navy Veterans were exposed to Agent Orange,” the VA said in a fact sheet.

U.S. Sen. Richard Blumenthal (D-Conn.), the ranking member of the Senate Veterans’ Affairs Committee, criticized the VA’s decision.

“Rather than siding with veterans, VA is doubling down on an irrational and inconsistent policy,” he said in a statement. “Young sailors risked their lives during the Vietnam War, unaware that decades later, they and their children and grandchildren would still feel the toxic effects of exposure. Veterans who served offshore and in the harbors of Vietnam were exposed and deserve the presumption of service connection for Agent Orange-related diseases.”

A 2011 Institute of Medicine report said there was no way to prove Blue Water vets were exposed to the chemicals, but it identified plausible routes that Agent Orange could have traveled out to sea and into a ship’s distillation system.

The VA said it is working with veterans groups to “initiate a groundbreaking study of Blue Water Navy Veterans health outcomes. We hope to have data gathered and analyses published in 2017.”

Veterans called the VA’s decision a betrayal. John Wells, a Louisiana lawyer who has spent more than a decade advocating for Blue Water veterans, said his group would continue challenging the VA and push for legislation that would mandate coverage for Blue Water veterans, said his group would continue challenging the VA and push for legislation that would mandate coverage for Blue Water veterans.
10, 1965. CMA3 Marvin G. Shields, USN, died in the assault and was awarded the Medal of Honor posthumously.

The Seabee era for units could be said to include the period from 1964 to 1973, when the last unit left Vietnam, or about nine years. The extended period, including Seabee Teams, would be from 1956-1973, or 17 years.

The Chiefs of Navy Civil Engineers and Heads of the Bureau of Yards & Docks during the Vietnam era were: RADM Peter Corradi, CEC, USN, from 12 February 1962 to 31 October 1965 and RADM Alexander C. Husband, CEC, USN, from 1 November 1965 to 29 August 1969. The change in title was made and the Commander, Naval Facilities Engineering Command was RADM Walter M. Engler, CEC, USN, from 29 August 1969 to 11 May 1973.

In the spring of 1965 there were 9,400 Seabees on active duty at various sea and shore locations. Most of the Seabees were assigned to ten peace-time (reduced) strength MCBs. They were split between Atlantic Seabees, Davisville, RI & Gulfport, MS, and Pacific Seabees, Port Hueneme, California, and their deployment sites.

A major training and logistics base for the Pacific Command was at Subic Bay in the Philippines where the Navy and the Bureau of Yards and Docks (later, Naval Facilities Engineering Command, renamed in 1969) had maintained a significant presence in the Far East dating back to the Korean Conflict buildup and basing of regiments and mobile construction battalions.

During the Vietnam era the total Seabee force grew from 9,400 in mid-1965 to 14,000 in mid-1966, to 20,000 in mid-1967, and finally, to more than 26,000 at the peak in 1968 & 1969. In 1969 the strength in Vietnam was about 11,000 consisting of units of all types (below). To help meet the great need for personnel the Navy recruited skilled construction workers at advanced pay grades. The direct procurement Petty Officer program was reminiscent of early World War II started in early 1966. Recruiting efforts proved highly effective both in terms of total numbers recruited (more than 13,000) and quality of input.

Two Reserve Seabee battalions were to make history as attention turned in 1967 to potential reserve battalion call-up planning. Of the eighteen reserve battalions, MCB-12, located in Davisville, Rhode Island, and MCB-22, located in Dallas, Texas, received orders in the month of June 1967 to prepare for recall to active duty. They reported aboard Construction Battalion Center, Gulfport, Mississippi. They served for about seven months each in Vietnam returning in July and August 1969.

In all, the following commissioned Seabee units served in Vietnam:
- MCB-1, -3 through -11, 12, 22, 40, 53, 58, 62, 71, 74, 121, 128, & 133,
- 3d Naval Construction Brigade,
- 30th Naval Construction Regiment,
- 32nd Naval Construction Regiment
- CBMU-301 and CBMU-302, and
- ACB-1 & ACB-2.

Seabee details, of various sizes but normally 50 men or less, were working in many places away from the parent unit throughout Vietnam. Seabee Teams were normally about 15 men with a CEC officer were normally engaged in USAID projects. Seabee Teams also operated from Thailand. Other units included CBPAC Det RVN and CBPAC Det Thai (Bangkok) which provided support to teams and units. Seabee equipment overhaul support was provided at Guam, Okinawa, and Yokosuka, Japan, as well as state-side at Treasure Island and Port Hueneme, California.

In addition there were two thousand plus Seabees assigned to Naval Support Activities (NSA) and their detachments throughout the country.

Units were generally on an eight-month deployment and a return to home port for six months before deploying again.

The strength of the Seabees decreased from 1969 until 1973 during the period of the Nixon Administration’s policy of Vietnamization, announced on 8 June 1969, until the last unit, CBMU-302, left South Vietnam in 1973. Two years more would elapse before the North Vietnam invasion force’s Final Offensive overwhelmed the South Vietnam military in April 1975.

VVA CHAPTER 388 OFFICER ELECTIONS

The election of Chapter Officers for the fiscal years 2016 and 2017 will be held during the Chapter’s up-coming April meeting - April 7, 2016.

Nominated candidates are:
- for Chapter President - Tom Spencer
- Chapter Vice President - Dan Giridoni
- Chapter Secretary - Lee Jackson
- Chapter Treasurer - Jack McQuirk

Nominations were accepted and closed by Election Committee Chair, Darrol Brown who will conduct the election on the 7th. Officers elected will be installed and begin their term of office in May, 2016.
**CARSON SHERIFF PROPOSES VETERAN SUPPORT STRUCTURE**

Carson City Sheriff Ken Furlong has identified a problem in the state capital, and he has proposed a way to solve it.

“There are a ton of veterans in this town that no one knows they’re here,” Furlong told a panel of community members, making specific note of the problem of homelessness among Carson City’s veteran population.

“Veterans should not be homeless,” Furlong said. “But it’s a repetitive problem we often hear.”

The panel consisted of veterans and veteran organization leaders, veteran support personnel, representatives from the local media.

Noting the absence of a Veterans Administration presence in Carson City, Furlong said the biggest problem for veterans here is the fragmentation of services, which makes finding the right one for a veteran’s needs difficult.

“We’re not well connected in Carson City,” Furlong said. “It’s a sad state that we are in a city where the mayor is a veteran, the city manager is a veteran, and the sheriff is a veteran, and we don’t know where to go for services.”

But using the State of Nevada’s Green Zone Initiative as a model for implementing a centralized network of service providers, Furlong hopes to change all of that.

“I have this vision of an Internet link on the Carson City government web site,” he said, “that takes you to a hub or wheel that has the answers.”

There are veteran resources for employment, education, housing and health care that already exist, and service providers who deliver them.

But the problem is connecting them all onto the same wheel to better serve veterans.

The members are in place for a structure, Furlong said, but they need to be connected by a proper and strong foundation that holds them together.

Furlong’s idea would have all veterans’ needs flow through a central hub where communication is shared among service providers to accomplish the goal of helping veterans meet their needs.

What the initiative is not is more government, Furlong said. Rather, it’s the same government pooling its resources together with community stakeholders to improve service delivery for veterans.

Furlong assured Wednesday’s panel that both the mayor and the city manager are fully on board with this concept.

“I’m asking government to endorse a link to services,” he said. “We need to reach out and get all of the stakeholders in this community together.”

Military veterans have a hard enough time amalgamating back into civilian life, Furlong said, and we owe it to them to make their lives a little bit easier.

“Veterans struggle with services, and I’m sympathetic to that,” he said. “I think we can create a door that opens veterans to the world.”
Welcome Home Brothers and Sisters.
- Mayor Bob Crowell

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Bronze Star (BSM)

by John Hussong

The Bronze Star Medal was originally established by Executive Order (E.O.) 9419 on February 4, 1944. Since then, it was superseded by E.O. 11046 on August 24, 1962 and then amended on February 28, 2003 by E.O. 13286.

The BSM may be awarded by the secretary of a military department or by the Secretary of Homeland Security (with regards to the U.S. Coast Guard) or by such military commanders as the secretary may designate.

The BSM may be awarded to any person who, while in service to: the Army, Navy, USMC, USAF or USCG of the United States after December 6, 1941 who distinguishes or has distinguished themselves by heroic or meritorious achievement (not including aerial flight):

  a. while engaged in action against an enemy of the U.S.
  b. while engaged in military operations involving conflict with an opposing force
  c. while serving with friendly forces engaged in an armed conflict against an opposing force

The BSM with the “V” device denotes heroism and is the 4th-highest military decoration for Valor and 9th-highest in order of precedence in the U.S. Military. Only one “V” device may be worn on a suspension and service ribbon, however, additional awards of the BSM are as follows:

  Army & USAF - oakleaf cluster
  USN, USMC, USC - 5/16” star

The Bronze Star Medal is awarded only to service members in combat who are receiving “imminent danger pay” (for us old timers, that would mean: hazardous duty pay or being in a combat zone)
This month brings the start of the 4th year of the Chapter's involvement with the Adopt a Vet Dental Program. The beginning of the month brings the memory of those early months when AAVD had 4 general dentists and 2 specialty dentists in the Carson Area. We've seen the program change and grow. There are presently 29 dentists donating their time, supplies, and effort in contributing to those veterans so much in need of dental care.

A summary of the services provided are:

- Presently 29 veterans are in some stage of dental treatment
- 23 veterans have been scheduled for pre-screening
- The 'waiting' list is gone for all veterans are in some stage of processing.
- The waiting period is now 0 months versus the 2.5 years in 2013.
- A total of 64 veterans from the Carson Area have completed their dental treatment...an average of 21.3 veterans per year!
- Average treatment value is estimate at $6500 - $8000
- 0 waiting acceptance by dentist, paperwork completed
- There are only 12 dentists not participating in the Carson Area. Recently we are attempting to contact these dentists to ascertain if they are now interested.

I am in the process of organizing the 4th Annual Poker Run event. The proceeds goes directly to the AAVD – Carson Area to help offset the cost of the dental lab fees. With the re-opening of Battle Born Harley-Davidson (Carson City) I have set a firm date for Saturday, August 6, 2016 for the Poker Run in which we estimate 100 bikers and riders. I've contact the band and food will again be provided by Grandma Hattie's. We hope to surpass last year's donation to the AAVD of $2,400. All members are asked to help with this event, either at registration, manning a “stop”, and/or soliciting raffle prizes.

I discovered another avenue of spreading the word about Adopt a Vet Dental by you informing your non VA physician. They often see veterans that are in need of dental care. Each Chapter member is asked to inform low-income veterans in need of dental treatment of the program and to continuously thank those dentists who provide their generosity. Please give either my phone number, e-mail me at bmhorton@charter.net, or the main office which is 870-4358 in Reno.

I appreciate your support with the AAVD program.
### 2016 TENTATIVE CALENDAR

*The below events and dates with the exception of Chapter Meetings, Breakfasts and National Holidays are tentative and subject to change.*

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<td>December 17</td>
<td>Wreaths Across America</td>
<td>Fernley</td>
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### HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Raleigh Patterson  Mar 1  Don Kemp  Apr 5  
Robert Winter  Mar 4  Bob Murdock  Apr 6  
Joe Matisohn  Mar 12  Eric Lydic  Apr 12  
Dan Howard  Mar 18  Roger Diez  Apr 22  
Stu Miller  Mar 22  
Al Keller  Mar 28  
Chuck Samicola  Mar 28  
Geneva Arnold  Mar 30  
Steve Lauritzen  Mar 31  

### MARCH FACTOID

A total of 9,087,000 military personnel served on active duty during the official Vietnam era from August 5, 1964 to May 7, 1975.

### A limited number of VVA POW-MIA Challenge Coins are available for a $10.00 or more donation to the Chapter!

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Websites

VVA  www.vva.org
- Programs, News, Forms, Services, Applications
  Benefits, Publications/Forms, LSO Listings
1-877-222-8387 (Help Line)
1-800-237-8255 (Crisis Line)
1-877-424-3838 (Homeless)

Service Records  www.archives.gov
Memorial Wall Research  www.virtualwall.org
Agent Orange Website  www.lewispublishing.com
- FAQ’s, Maps, VA Compensation & Claims

General Military  www.military.com
- Benefit Info, News, Stories, Buddy Finder

Nevada Dept. of Veteran Services  www.veterans.nv.us
- Benefit Info, News

Army Times  www.armytimes.com
- Online Publication, News, Benefit Info

Navy Times  www.navytimes.com
- Online Publication, News, Benefit Info

Marine Corps Times  www.marinecorps-times.com
- Online Publication, News, Benefit Info

Air Force Times  www.airforcetimes.com
- Online Publication, News, Benefit Info

50th Anniversary - Vietnam War  www.vietnam50th.com
Events, Photos, Interactive Timeline

Local Veteran Services

F.I.S.H.
138 Long Street
Carson City, NV 89706
Office: 775-992-3474
email: www.info@nvfish.com

Healthcare for Homeless Veterans
350 Capitol Hill
Reno, NV 89502
Office: 775-324-6600

Nevada Job Connect
775-4684-0456
1929 N. Carson Street
Carson City, NV 89701

Northern Nevada Veterans Resource Center
Reno  419 W. Plumb Lane
     Reno, NV 89509
     775-284-8387

Carson  305 N. Carson St., Suite 201
City  Carson City, NV 89701
     (775) 283-4838
     (775) 360-2157 - fax

Reno Veteran Center
5580 Mill Street
Reno, NV 89502
Office: 775-323-1294
Fax: 775-322-8123

US Veterans Employment Services
500 E 3rd Street
Carson City, NV 89713
Office: 687-4632

Veterans Employment Services
State Dept. of Employment, Training & Rehabilitation
1933 N. Carson Street
Carson City, NV 89701
Office: 775-684-0400

Veterans Healthcare USA
145 Esmeralda Drive.
Washoe Valley, Nevada 89704
Office: 887-338-8807

Western Nevada College Veterans Resource Center
Western Nevada College
Cedar Building 327
2201 West College Parkway
Carson City, NV 89703
(775) 445-3000

State of Nevada Department of Veterans Services
Katherine Miller, Director - millerk@veterans.nv.gov

Veterans Service Officers
Reno-  5460 Reno Corporate Dr. Ste. 104
      Reno, NV 89511
      Office: 775-321-4880
      Fax: 775-321-4848

Fallon-  458 W. B Street, Ste. 103
       Fallon, NV 89406
       Office: 775-428-1177
       Fax: 775-423-9371

Joe Matisohn, Veterans Service Officer
(775) 835-3181  email: benefits.al@gmail.com

Caleb Cage, Director of Military and Veterans Policy - Nevada Governors Office
(775) 684-5670